

RUNNERS

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Pinnell said. "We had to have big races from those two, and they came through for us."

MARLINS WIN LEAGUE MEET

Farmington Hills Mercy improved its Catholic League dual-meet record to 3-1 Tuesday when it defeated visiting Harper Woods Regina at Case Benton Park, 20-40.

Shannon LaFave led the Marlins to victory with a first-place time of 21:23.

Mercy's Elizabeth Williams was second (21:59), Catherine Vaughn third (22:32), Megan Andrejak fourth (22:36) and Shannon Longley sixth (23:55).

The Marlins had three others in the top 10. Karen Toepf placed seventh (24:19), Cathie Schubert eighth (24:32) and Amanda Nagy 10th (25:02).

Mercy was fourth in the eight-team Division I standings and fourth among 19 teams overall Saturday at the Center Line Carl Schoensee Memorial Classic.

LaFave finished ninth (19:58), Williams 10th (20:15), Andrejak 43rd (21:47), Longley 54th (22:20), Nagy 59th (22:31), Toepf 66th (22:42) and Schubert 72nd (22:53). The top 100 received medals.

"It looks like our top two kids are doing a really good job," Mercy coach Gary Servais said. "We have to close the gap with the rest of them. Hopefully, we can get that going in the next three weeks."

RAIDERS RUN PAST FALCONS

North Farmington won a double dual in boys cross country over Farmington, 25-32, and Southfield Christian, 20-41, Tuesday at OCC.

The Raiders are 4-0 in Division II of the Oakland Activities Association and 5-0 overall.

The Falcons also defeated the Eagles, 20-43.

Southfield Christian had the top runner in Luke Hutchings, who won the race in 17:33, just behind the next three — Jeff Mataya (18:04), Ben Gannon (18:13) and Eugene Furman (18:17).

Though the Falcons had

seven runners in front of the Raiders' top five, the trio of Mataya, Gannon and Furman made it possible for North to overcome Farmington.

"Unfortunately, the weather again was extremely hot and humid," North coach Paul Welch said. "I think it slowed people down. I'm not necessarily pleased with our times, but I'm happy with the result."

"We still have a lot of work to do from our fourth and fifth runners."

The Raiders have an important division dual meet Tuesday at Berkley that includes Bloomfield Hills Lahser and Birmingham Groves.

"Whoever comes out on top there is going to be the division champ," Welch said, adding Lahser is the favorite.

"We're going to have our work cut out for us. We have a solid front three and, if the fourth and fifth guys put it on the line that day, you never know what can happen."

Farmington's top runners included Ryan Kiblaw (18:56), Patrick Whinnery (18:58), Dan Clay (19:13), Kyle Mason (19:34), Lance Dawson (19:43), Chris Clark (19:47) and Mike Gierney (19:49).

"For the first time all season, every kid on our roster started the race, so that was a positive," Falcons coach Chip Bridges said. "We had seven in front of North's fifth guy, but they're just too tough up front."

"We're coming back. The next couple races will be really big, and we're hoping we can improve over the next couple weeks and be a much better team once we get to the conference meet."

HARRISON BOYS PREVAIL

Waterford Kettering had the top runner Tuesday, but host Farmington Harrison won the boys dual meet, 27-31.

Justin Switzer won the race in 17:26, but the Hawks captured six of the next eight places.

Harrison's Brian Coats was second (17:59), Wayne Wright fourth (18:59), Brian Masters sixth (19:36), Nick Israel seventh (19:40), Matt Drew eighth (19:43) and Andrew Singer ninth (20:03).

"Coats stayed with (Switzer) for two miles and I told him, unless he felt really awesome, not to push it," Hawks coach

John Reed said. "It could have been closer but we're going to try to get him on Saturday at the county meet."

"It was very hot today. I told the kids to do as well as they could to win the meet, but we want to do well Saturday at the county meet."

"The kids are doing really well. We're expecting big things at the end of the season. We're progressing well. When we're going to start to run a lot better."

Harrison is 3-1 in the OAA Division III and 5-1 overall.

HAWKS OUTSCORE CAPTAINS

Irina Maslennikova finished first (22:35) and Shannon Bailey second (23:10) to lead the Farmington Harrison girls to a 23-32 win over visiting Waterford Kettering Tuesday at OCC.

For the Hawks, Emome Green was fifth (25:04), Yana Homutskits sixth (26:12), Amber Brown ninth (27:32) and Janita Fair 12th (29:02).

"The times were way up today," Harrison coach Mark Babcock said, adding the heat and humidity were factors. "But it was still a pretty solid effort."

"We needed to get a victory and that was our goal. We knew the times would be way up. We were trying to hold it together and come up with a victory. Everybody felt pretty good about that."

"We can definitely do better and we will."

The Hawks are 2-2 in the OAA Division III.

GIRLS RACE RESULTS

1. Susan Britton (NF), 20:39; 2. Rachel Burton (F), 20:58; 3. Claire Caspik (F), 21:24; 4. Val Allen (SC), 21:25; 5. Katie Reiss (SC), 22:02; 6. Katie Wan (NF), 22:27; 7. Amy Miller (NF), 22:32; 8. Janelle Lindner (F), 22:48; 9. Jackie Murren (NF), 23:03; 10. Carleigh Verrier (SC), 23:08; 11. Magalie Anboud (F), 23:16; 12. Emma Caspik (F), 23:52; 13. Katie Peterson (NF), 24:03; 14. Amanda Gliss (F), 24:06; 15. Stephanie Kallison (SC), 24:22; 16. Taneer Escamilla (F), 24:38; 17. Julie Kaplan (NF), 25:08; 18. Angie Schober (F), 25:14; 19. Sara Brownlee (SC), 25:28; 20. Shara Orlanuk (NF), 25:29.

BOYS RACE RESULTS

1. Luke Hutchings (SC), 17:33; 2. Jeff Mataya (NF), 18:04; 3. Ben Gannon (NF), 18:13; 4. Eugene Furman (NF), 18:17; 5. Ryan Kiblaw (F), 18:56; 6. Patrick Whinnery (F), 18:58; 7. Dan Clay (F), 19:13; 8. Dan Carlson (NF), 19:34; 9. Kyle Mason (F), 19:34; 10. Lance Dawson (F), 19:43; 11. Chris Clark (F), 19:47; 12. Mike Gierney (F), 19:49; 13. James Ugas (NF), 20:12; 14. Doug Goodman (SC), 20:27; 15. Brad Smith (NF), 20:39; 16. Jason Mucilli (NF), 20:41; 17. Steve Gannon (NF), 20:54; 18. Dave Mayfield (NF), 21:00; 19. Jordan Dweilley (SC), 21:10; 20. Jason Lubin (NF), 21:20.

Two defending county champions eye title repeats

BY DANIEL STICKRAT
STAFF WRITER

When the 43rd Annual Oakland County Cross-Country Championships kick off this Saturday, spectators can expect the defending champions to be tough to beat — in the team race.

As for individuals, there could very well be some surprises.

Defending champions Milford (boys) and Clarkston (girls) are not only heavy favorites to repeat. They're also the top-ranked squads in the state in Division 1, and they have yet to lose to another Michigan school this year.

The races will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday at Kensington Metropark's Plum Hollow Course near Milford.

"If those two teams win, there'll be no surprises there," Bloomfield Hills Lahser coach Nick Stratton said. "They're both loaded."

Loaded indeed.

Both schools have been moving teams over this season, using both top flight runners at the front of the pack and superior depth. In fact, both squads have junior-varsities that could beat over half the schools in the county.

As for individuals, defending boys champ Tim Moore has graduated, leaving the door open for a new champion to be crowned. That front pack should involve two runners: Milford junior Dan DeRusha, who has gone a county-best 15:14 already this year, and Walled Lake Western junior Neal Naughton, who has already broken 13:45.

"If DeRusha doesn't win it, then we'll would think Neal Naughton would be able to get him," said Stratton. "But Milford has a bunch of guys in the (15s and 16s)."

Lahser, which finished third in the Division 2 state meet last year, will be amongst the better teams at the county, as they are led by freshman prospect Mike Quick, who has posted a time of

16:23 already this season — a time almost unheard of by a freshman this early in the season.

"We'll see how he'll do against the big boys," said Stratton. "But I would like to think that he could be up there."

While Milford is expected to win going away, there's close to a dozen schools that will be vying for other spots in the top 10.

"It should be very interesting," said Lake Orion coach Stan Ford. "There's a lot of (parity)."

Among those schools should be Birmingham Brother Rice, Novi, White Lake Lakeland, Lahser, Rochester, Clarkston, Oxford, Walled Lake Western, Troy and Lake Orion, among others.

The top 30 runners in each race medal.

In the girls individual run, the defending champ is Rochester Adams senior Shannon Stanley, who is also a two-time state runner-up in Division 1. Stanley is not this year's favorite, as she has struggled with consistency during the season's first half and has been beaten several times.

The favorite this year is Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest sophomore Laura Rolf. This will be Northwest's first time in the county meet since 1995, and Rolf's first time to race against some of the state's elite, as she missed the Division 4 state meet last year due to an illness.

Rolf recently went a sizzling 18:24, the fastest time in the county and one of the state's best so far this season, although Kensington's hilly 3.1-mile terrain will provide a much tougher course for all competing runners.

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